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HIGHLIGHTS

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Nuclear Security Summit kicks off in Seoul



The nuclear security summit opened in Seoul with the participation of President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan

HIGHLIGHT

Date for Nagorno-Karabakh presidential elections is set

The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's (NKR) next presidential elections will be held on July 19, 2012.

This decision was reached during Nagorno-Karabakh parliament's plenary session on March 29.

The previous NKR presidential elections were conducted on July 19, 2007, and incumbent President Bako Sahakyan was elected Head of State.



Reformatting of Armenia's political field starts

by David Petrosyan

The period, in which the documents for registration of parliamentary candidates for the RA National Assembly by majoritarian districts and the proportional electoral system (party lists) shall be submitted to election commissions, is over in Armenia.

It is the first time since 1995, i.e. during the period when part of the Armenian parliament has been elected by the proportional system, that only nine subjects, namely eight parties and one electoral bloc (the Armenian National Congress - ANC), will run in the elections. During all the previous elections the number of subjects included in the ballot papers was usually about two dozen, very often even more. For instance, at the last parliamentary elections 24 parties and one electoral bloc "Alternative" were included in the ballot papers.

It is quite obvious that the participation of as many subjects as

possible under the proportional electoral system will be for the benefit of the ruling "party in power" This usually leads to the dispersion of votes of the protest electorate that forms a large proportion of the Armenian voters: according to official statistics, more than one third of the population is considered poor. The votes dispersed among many subjects subsequently were smoothly transferred to the credit of those parties which have passed the 5% election threshold. The big players to have received the greatest number of votes benefited from such redistribution. In any event, this was the case at the last elections when the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) benefited from the participation of a lot of subjects in those elections.

Now the situation is somewhat different because in 2007, 2.5 times as many subjects were included in the ballot papers by the

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"The security of the world depends on the actions that we take." Obama



The nuclear security summit opened in Seoul with the participation of President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan. Heads of 53 countries and four international organizations discussed prior issues of nuclear security which once again gave room for thought after Fukushima tragedy.

The world leaders agreed that steps undertaken for the reinforcement of nuclear security must be consistent and ongoing.

The heads of countries and international organizations discussed at the March 26 working dinner ways to tackle the threat of the nuclear

terrorism.

A summit to tackle the threat of nuclear terrorism has ended with a call for vulnerable atomic material to be secured. US President Barack Obama warned "the security of the world depends on the actions that we take."

The meeting in Seoul focused on progress made in reducing the risks such as the clean-up of a former Soviet nuclear test site in Kazakhstan. Its President Nursultan Nazarbayev thanked one-time Cold War rivals Russia and the United States for their collaboration in the joint project at the Semipalatinsk site.

While not officially on the agenda, the two-day summit was overshadowed by North Korea's plan to launch a rocket next month. Pyongyang insists it will carry a weather satellite into orbit. The West says it is a disguised test of a long-range missile.

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President Serzh Sargsyan met with the highest leadership of Singapore

On March 28, the President of Armenia met with the highest leadership of Singapore - President Tony Tan Keng Yam, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and participated at the dinner given by the Business Federation of Singapore in honor of the President of Armenia which was also attended by the leading businessmen and heads of the most powerful corporations.

The Presidents of Singapore and Armenia discussed issues pertinent to the development of cooperation in different areas, possible steps aimed at the invigoration of the Armenian-Singaporean political dialogue. According to the President of Singapore Tony Tan Keng Yam, although the two countries established relations twenty years ago, the Armenian-Singaporean relations have been existing for over 150 years: Armenians in Singapore published first newspaper and established the first Christian church. In Serzh Sargsyan's words, as a rapidly developing successful state Singapore is a good example for other countries, including Armenia. The two Presidents have expressed desire that this year, when the two states celebrate a jubilee of the establishment of diplomatic relations, would become also a year of strengthening and expanding the Armenian-Singaporean cooperation. They have spoken about cooperation in the areas of education, science, civil service and introduction of the Singaporean experience in Armenia.

At the meeting with the Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, the parties referred in particular to the necessity of deepening economic cooperation between Armenia and Singapore.

According to Lee Hsien Loong, small countries do not decide on the course of international relations but follow international rules. The Prime Minister has said that in his opinion, the size of the country is not an impediment for the development. He has noted that it is no accident that both countries have participated at the Nuclear Summit in Seoul.

At the meeting of the President of Armenia and Prime Minister of Singapore the significant role of the Armenian community in the history of country was also underscored. Noting, in particular, good reputation of the Armenian entrepreneurs and their unique mission in the development of the commercial relations in Singapore at the end of the 19th century, Lee Hsien Loong expressed desire to see the reestablishment of the Armenian-Singaporean close economic relations.

At the Istana residence in

Singapore, the official negotiations were concluded with the document signing ceremony. In particular, signed were the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Singapore in the cultural area and Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Singapore on the mutual abolishment of visa regime for the holders of diplomatic and service passports.

In the framework of the state visit, President Serzh Sargsyan visited also the Botanic Garden of Singapore, where the ceremony of terming the "Orchid of Singapore" flower - which is the national symbol of Singapore - has taken place. Such ceremonies in Singapore are held in honor of the high-level guests of the country and distinguished figures. The Armenian President's participation in the ceremony carries another meaning as well: the orchid type which carries "Wanda Miss Joakim" name is also known as the "Orchid of Singapore" or "Orchid of Princess Aloha". It received its name in honor of the Singaporean flower breeder of the Armenian descent Agnes Joakim (Ashkhen Hovakimian), who had discovered this breed. Agnes Joakim (Ashkhen Hovakimian) was born on April 7, in 1854 in Singapore, in the family of Barsegh and Urelia Joakim (Hovakimian).

In the inscription made in the Book of Honorary Guests, President Sargsyan wrote on this occasion, "This wonder of nature - "Wanda Miss Joakim" orchid, contains in full measure harmony and beauty which are peculiar to Singapore and its people. I am proud that the national symbol of Singapore bears the name of the Armenian Agnes Joakim. Through her love for everything beautiful, Agnes had forever intertwined the Armenians in the history of the people of Singapore. Let this magnificent flower become also a symbol of the everlasting Armenian-Singaporean friendship."

At the meeting with the leading businessmen and heads of the most powerful corporations of Singapore, President Serzh Sargsyan discussed prospects of making investments in Armenia. The representatives of the business community of Singapore were particularly interested in the opportunities for cooperating with Armenia in the areas of information technologies, telecommunications, health care, urban development and programming, construction of hydro-energy stations, waste management and water resources. At the meeting with Serzh Sargsyan, it was agreed that the Armenian businessmen will visit Singapore in the nearest future for translating negotiations and intentions into concrete programs.

At the conclusion of the first day of the President's state visit to Singapore, President Tony Tan Keng Yam hosted a state dinner in honor of the President of Armenia.

President Serzh Sargsyan participated in Seoul at the International Nuclear Summit 2012

President Serzh Sargsyan, who was in the Republic of Korea on a working visit, participated on March 27 in Seoul at the International Nuclear Summit 2012. At the Summit, President Sargsyan made a statement. First, Serzh Sargsyan thanked the organizers of the Summit and personally President Lee Myung-bak for hosting this pivotal for the global security event. The President of Armenia hailed also continuous efforts of the U.S. President Barack Obama since the 2010 Summit in Washington.

"Nuclear security has been a priority issue for Armenia. To register positive results, we have been persistently and readily supporting and implementing proposed programs, have taken concrete steps to create monitoring mechanism," President Serzh Sargsyan underscored. According to the President, a new law has been adopted regarding export, transit of dual use goods, including nuclear and radioactive materials, as well as monitoring of the transfer of dual use information and results of intellectual activities.

The President of Armenia also noted that in cooperation with and assistance of the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, Armenia is carrying out a program of personnel retraining and augmentation of the customs technical devices. In President Sargsyan's words, the Republic of Armenia fully endorses the implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1540.

"At the Washington Summit, we all underscored the critical importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency's central role in upholding nuclear security, preservation and control over radioactive materials. As a producer of nuclear energy, Armenia is developing a multifaceted cooperation with the IAEA. Safe use of the Armenian NPS and upgrading of its safety level, issues of its physical protection, as well as conservation and con-



trol over the radioactive waste are among priorities of our government. On this issue, we strictly adhere to the international requirements developed by the Agency for the nuclear power stations of that generation.

The OSART mission of the IAEA conducted last year also verified full compliance of the Armenian NPS to these norms," President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan said.

Taking the opportunity, President Sargsyan expressed gratitude to the IAEA, the Russian Federation, EU and all those countries, organizations and experts who were cooperating with and assisting Armenia on this important issue.

Serzh Sargsyan referred also to the disinformation spoken by the President of Azerbaijan regarding the Armenian Nuclear Power Station. "As for the disinformation broadcasted here by the President of Azerbaijan regarding the Armenia NPS, it doesn't surprise me a bit because vilification of Armenia has become a modus operandi for Azerbaijan long ago. Not only every issue related to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh is presented from the highest podiums in the most perverted way but also the documents adopted by the international community, i.e. by us and by you. Even the UN Security Council resolutions related to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict are distorted, neglecting the fact that they were the ones who started the military actions; they were the ones who refused to cease them, they are the ones who voice belligerent statements on a daily

basis and refuse to solve the NK issue in accordance with international law," President Sargsyan noted.

The President of Armenia said that after disasters on Chernobyl and Fukushima many currently approach issues related to the future of nuclear energy with apprehension. According to President Sargsyan, in some special cases such as Armenia, there is little choice to ensure sustainable development of our people and improvement of living standards.

Serzh Sargsyan also noted that it would be appropriate to view all energy, including nuclear energy security issues in the context of all contiguous issues. He has said that the fight against turning energy resources into vicious political capital is not less important. Serzh Sargsyan has expressed confidence that the consequences of such policy are particularly taxing for the countries which do not have natural energy resources and are compelled to look for the avenues to achieve energy independence. "Two out of Armenia's four neighbors, in blatant violation of international norms have been blockading our country for the last twenty years, among other things leaving us no alternatives in achieving energy independence," President Sargsyan said.

At the conclusion of his speech, the President of Armenia reiterated Armenia's commitment to the fight against illegal use of nuclear material, as well as our country's determination to support international efforts in combating terrorism.

Armenian President expresses his gratitude to Russian, U.S. and French leaders

On March 26 Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan sent a message to the heads of OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs countries on the 20th anniversary of the decision of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe to start the Minsk process for peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

In the letter addressed to Dmitri Medvedev, Barack Obama and Nicolas Sarkozy, Serzh Sargsyan expressed his gratitude for the consistent efforts made by the co-chairing countries and the leaders of the countries towards settling the Nagorno Karabakh conflict over 20 years.

The Armenian President stressed that though the main goal of the Minsk process, the settle-



ment of the conflict, is still unfulfilled; the importance of the work implemented by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs to bring the positions of the sides together, work out the Basic Principles, defuse the tension and maintain peace over the past 20 years can scarcely be overestimated.

ed.

Serzh Sargsyan assured that Armenia was very much interested in settling the conflict and it would continue its positive and constructive engagement into the process of the peaceful settlement of the conflict within the Minsk Group.



Armenian opposition leader meets EU ambassadors



Armenia's first president, leader of opposition Armenian National Congress (ANC), Levon Ter-Petrosyan met the EU ambassadors at the EU Delegation Embassy on March 28.

As the press service of ANC

informs, the aim of the meeting was to discuss the upcoming parliamentary elections and ANC's actions.

The ambassadors asked Levon Ter-Petrosyan to present his considerations on the legitimacy of the

upcoming parliamentary elections. The attention of the audience was directed to the fact that although the population decreased in Armenia, the number of voters continued to grow.

On the ambassador's proposal Levon Ter-Petrosyan also presented the ANC's future actions in the parliament and the principles of making the proportional list.

ANC board members Levon Zurabyan and Avetis Avagyan also participated in the meeting.

The Armenian National Congress (ANC) is an opposition bloc founded in 2008 after presidential elections. During the August 1, 2008, rally in Yerevan the first President of Armenia and ANC leader Levon Ter-Petrosyan announced formation of the bloc. ANC comprises 18 parties and political forces.

The ANC proportional list includes 119 names. It has also nominated MP candidates with the majority election system.

Armenian opposition party leader withdraws candidacy



Armenia's opposition Heritage Party Chairman Raffi Hovhannesian withdrew his candidacy from capital Yerevan's Electoral District No. 7, where he was to run for a major-

ity-election parliamentary seat against pro-government businessman Samvel Aleksanyan, and Haykakan Zhamanak daily's chief editor and opposition bloc

Armenian National Congress (ANC) member, Nikol Pashinyan.

On Monday's press conference, Hovhannesian noted that he met with the ANC and opposition ARF Dashnaktsutyun Party representative, in the past several days, to discuss his offer of supporting one opposition candidate in each electoral district, but the ANC had refused his proposal.

"Our offer was turned down, and I regret that. This was a matter of an oppositional demeanor, ambitions, [and] self-respect. I decided to withdraw my candidacy. Nonetheless, I wish all the best and success to all pro-government and opposition candidates, who will run in the forthcoming National Assembly elections," Raffi Hovhannesian noted.

ARF Dashnaktsutyun criticized Armenia's electoral law



Head of parliament opposition ARF Dashnaktsutyun group Vahan Hovhannesian criticized Armenia's electoral law.

Foreign states allow voting for citizens living in other states, the opposition MP said at a press conference on Monday.

First Armenia opposed to dual citizenship, later allowing it, banned the citizens to vote beyond if they are outside the country. Another negative side is extremely high election bail for the parties participating in the elections.

As for the necessity of merging political powers, Hovhannesian said that it was not always positive. There are small parties, which bring forth larger number of population to participate in the elections.

"Population wants small parties," he stressed adding despair is useful for the authorities. It will give them more opportunity for falsifications as voters become indifferent for the elections.

In general, the new electoral law is likely to keep the voters away from being interested in the elections.

"The security of the world depends on the actions that we take." Obama

From page 1

World leaders: Nuclear terrorism a 'grave threat'

World leaders have called for closer cooperation to tackle the threat of nuclear terrorism at a summit on nuclear security in Seoul.

A communique at the end of the summit reiterated a joint call to secure "vulnerable nuclear material".

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak said nuclear terrorism remained a "grave threat", while U.S. President Barack Obama said action was key.

The meeting was dominated by North Korea's plan to launch a rocket.

North Korea says the long-range rocket will carry a satellite when it goes up in April. The U.S. says any launch would violate UN resolutions and constitute a missile test.

Iran's nuclear program was also on the minds of the summit participants, with Mr Obama pledging to meet the leaders of Russia and China on the sidelines to work towards a resolution.

'Bad actors'

At the meeting, world leaders discussed measures to fight the threat of nuclear terrorism, including the protection of nuclear materials and facilities, as well as the prevention of trafficking of nuclear materials.

The communique describes nuclear terrorism as one of the most challenging threats to international security. But the responsibility to maintain security over nuclear materials lies firmly with states rather than international bodies. And any effort to try to establish or

impose common international standards inevitably raises concerns in some quarters that the world's major powers are seeking to intrude into the nuclear affairs of other countries.

That's why this communique reaffirms that measures to strengthen nuclear security will not hamper the rights of states to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The summit urges states to minimize the use of highly enriched uranium - one of the building blocks for a nuclear bomb.

The summit highlights the threat from radioactive materials more generally. But again all the summit can do is urge states to take measures to secure these materials and work towards ratifying international conventions on nuclear security. It is hardly a resounding outcome from a gathering over-shadowed by the more immediate wrangling over North Korea's and Iran's nuclear activities.

Addressing the summit, Mr Obama warned there were still "too many bad actors" who were threatening to stockpile and use "dangerous" nuclear material.

"It would not take much, just a handful or so of these materials, to kill hundreds of thousands of innocent people and that's not an exaggeration, that's the reality that we face," he said.

"The security of the world depends on the actions that we take."

Mr Hu called for "an international environment conducive to boosting nuclear security" to be created and Mr Lee called for concrete action to tackle a threat that posed "a grave challenge" to peace.

The summit was attended by almost 60 leaders from around the world.

Writer becomes victim of censorship in Armenia

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor Office and Armenian Helsinki Committee made a statement in connection to the book The Day of Discharge by an Armenian writer Hovhannes Ishkhanyan, who was interrogated by the military police.

"The writer Ishkhanyan was interrogated for his book on Feb. 27 and later on Mar. 23 by the military police. The police consider that the

book has distorted the reality by discrediting Armenia's Armed Forces, insulting the religion and the Armenian mothers. At the same time, having found no accusations, police tries to instigate criminal proceedings on dissemination of pornographic materials and subjects. We demand that police put an end to the preparation of instigating proceedings and persecutions for Ishkhanyan," the statement reads.





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FOR SALE

1 ROOMS

- ◆ **683. Argishti street**, Glendel Hills, 14/10, 35.4sqm, newly built, euro repaired, gas in the building, permanent water, beautiful view of ravine. Price 45.000USD
- ◆ **667. Nalbandyan street**, 7/5, 48sqm, 1room changed into two, excellent state, euro repaired, AC, lift. Price-86.000USD
- ◆ **684. Mashtoc avenue**, 5/4, 37.4 sq.m., 1 room, stone building, a need to repair, old tiles, no water and gas, balcony looks at the avenue. Price: 70.000 USD
- ◆ **69. Khajaznuni street**, 9/2, habituated. 50.6 sq.m, 1 room, capitally repaired, euro windows, Ariston, permanent hot and cold water, no balcony. Price: 52.000 USD
- ◆ **645. Baghramyany Street**, 5/1, 48 sq/m, newly repaired, iron door, euro windows, doors, AC, cabin, water tank. Price: 72.000USD

2 ROOMS

- ◆ **1445. Sayat-Nova street**, 5/4, 73 sq.m. 2 rooms, stone building, capitally repaired, furnished, h-3 m. Price: 150 000 USD
- ◆ **1467. Mashtoc av.** 8/5 81sq.m. 2 made 3 , stone , special project , old but repaired, always running hot and cold water, looking at the Sun. Price 125.000\$
- ◆ **1440. North Avenue**, 3rd floor, 110sqm, 1 bedroom, newly built, euro repaired, furniture, parking, h-3m, spanish tiles, permanent hot and cold water, heating system. Price 350.000USD
- ◆ **1459. Baghramyany Avenue**, 5/3, 55 sq.m., 2 rooms, capitally repaired, h-3.8 m, balcony, iron door, permanent hot and cold water, telephone, furniture and techniques. Price: 49. 000.000 AMD
- ◆ **1458. Bryusov street**, 9/8, 68 sq.m., 2 rooms, normal state, Baxi system, Czech tiles, showcases, wood doors and parquet. Price 75.000 USD
- ◆ **1469 Tumanyan str.** 4/3 50sq.m 2 rooms, repaired, furnished. Price 47.5mln. AM dram
- ◆ **1357. Pushkin street**, 8/6 floor, 77 sq.m., 2 rooms, newly built, furniture, techniques. Price 165000\$

3 ROOMS

- ◆ **2474. Koryun Street**, 5/3, 100 sq.m., 3 turned into 4, euro repair , euro windows, permanent gas, balcony, 2 AC, opportunity. Price 160.000 USD
- ◆ **2454. Moskovyan str.**, 5/2, 180sqm, normal state, 3 bedrooms, lavatory, permanent water, gas. Price 370.000USD
- ◆ **2453. Koryun str.**, 6/4, 100sqm, 4 rooms, euro repaired, 2 lavatories. Price negotiable
- ◆ **2429.** Ekmalyan street, 10/9, 178sqm, 3bedrooms, 3lavatories, capitally repaired, AC, parking. Price-360.000USD
- ◆ **2393. Moskovyan street**, 5/3. 110 sq.m., euro repair, logha balcony 17 sq.m., permanent hot and cold water, cube 700 l, electric heating system, natural gas, Ariston, 2AC, satellite. Price: 400 000 USD
- ◆ **Tumanyan str.** 5/3, 170 sqm, 4 rooms, 2 garages for 3 cars, capitally repaired, furnished, equipped, permanent water, gas, heating system, 3 balconies. Price: 1100 USD
- ◆ **2335. Mashtots Avenue**, 4/4, 95 sq.m., 3 rooms, 2 bedrooms, stone building, euro repaire, euro doors and windows, open balcony, permanent hot and cold water, concrete cover, beech parquetry, h 3 m, closed attic. Price 125000 USD
- ◆ **2348. Abovyan Street**, 4/2, 177.8 sq/m, euro repaired, concreted, laminate furniture in the bedroom, cupboards in the kitchen, tiled, Baxi system, Price: 250000 USD preliminary
- ◆ **2395.** North Avenue. 130 sq.m., newly built, h-3 m, a view to Abovyan street. Price: 1 sq.m.-1600 USD

PREMISES

- ◆ **1710. Sayat - Nova str.**, 1st floor, 420sqm, 2 rooms, 2 lavatories, entrance from street. Price 1.000.000USD
- ◆ **1727. Baghramyany str.**, 2 storied, 230sqm, capitally repaired, entrance from street, garage. Price 350.000USD
- ◆ **1725. Hanrapetutyany str.**, 1storied, 171sqm, 2 entrances, capitally repaired, permanent hot and cold water. Price 500.000USD
- ◆ **1703. Northern Avenue**, 9/7, 66sqm, capitally repaired, heating, lavatory, 30000AMD service rent, view to Teryan street. Price 220,000USD
- ◆ **1553. Kasyan street**, 170sq.m., working fashion saloon, large windows, facade-15m, 1room+foye, h=2.80 m, cellar 30 sq.m. Price 500 000 USD preliminary
- ◆ **1598. Nairy Zaryan street**, 180 sq.m., 1st floor, a working restaurant, hall-100 sq.m. 1st line, repaired, tonir. Price: negotiable
- ◆ **1383. Nalbandyan St**, cellar + 1 story, 30 sq. m. cellar, 90 sq. m. story, Euro repair, hall, kitchen, lavatory, 24-hour hot and cols water, gas supply, suitable for a bar or restaurant. Price: 512.000USD
- ◆ **Tumanyan str.**, 3/1, 100 sqm, office space, not repaired, entrance from the street, windows looking at the yard. Price: 115.000 USD
- ◆ **1603. North avenue**, 159 sq.m., 1st floor.

Entrance on ground floor also, construction is in process, suitable for a shop. Price: 1 sq.m. 10 000 USD

- ◆ **1588. Tigran Mec street**, 256 sq.m, 5/1.2 , trade area, stone building, euro repair, 1st floor trade area - 210 sq.m., 2nd floor 46 sq.m. residential Area. Price: 600 000 USD

LANDS

- ◆ **2122. Davitashen**, 1800sqm, water, gas, electricity, possible to sell separately 600sqm, 1200sqm. Price-150USD per sqm.
- ◆ **1869. Kaskade**, 720 sq.m. 1st line, permission for construction, suitable for a new building or a business. Price: negotiable
- ◆ **2121. Centre**, land-1338sqm, 1100sqm has permission for building. Price-2million USD
- ◆ **2107 Monument**, 2400sqm, permission for building, 2 projects to build 3 storied building, possibility of water, gas, electricity, beautiful view of city and Ararat. Price-500USD per sqm.
- ◆ **2033. Tsakhkadzor**, New Quarter, 600 sq.m., 1st line, asphalted road, premises, designed for construction of residential house, with all communal conveniences. Price: 120 USD for 1 sq.m.
- ◆ **1939. Kotayk region**, Aghavnadzor district. Land 5000 sq.m., suitable for building a resort place. Price negotiable
- ◆ **2011. Proshyan street**, Land 400 sq.m. for building a house, privatized, 2nd line/ near the garden/. Price 1 sq.m. beginning from 700 USD
- ◆ **2013. Cascade**, Land 1000 sq.m. For public construction needs, First line, gas, water and electricity possibilities. Price 2800USD
- ◆ **2028. District of Erebuni**, Arin-Berd street. Land 2 acr. With a 2 storied partially built building, water, electricity plastered.h=4.20m. Price 1 sq.m, 50 USD
- ◆ **1402. Hr. Kochar St**, 1,100 sq. m, personal plot, front -25 m, privatized, empty, possibility for building communications. Price negotiable.
- ◆ **1351. Monument**, 2,000 sq. m, privatized, front - 17 m, APZ permission, for social purposes: suitable for a restaurant, hotel. Price negotiable.

PRIVATE HOUSES

- ◆ **2725. Nork-Marash**, building - 733.25sqm, land-620sqm, semi-basement +2floors, euro repaired, semi-basement is sport room, sauna, summer room, pool, fireplace, 1st floor- sitting room, 1 bedroom, cabinet, kitchen, lavatory, 2nd floor - 4 bedrooms, permanent hot and cold water, gas, Spanish tiles, 2 AC. Price - 500.000USD
- ◆ **3063. Komitas A.** Avetisyan street, 3storied+cellar, total-500sqm, 3 bedrooms, 3 lavatories, capitally repaired, cabinet, possible to sell with furniture. Price-negotiable
- ◆ **3059. Vahagni community**, total-1500sqm, building-280sqm, 2.5 storied, newly built, not lived in, 1st floor-living room-44sqm, kitchen, family room-24sqm, 2nd floor-3bedrooms, 3 lavatories, garage for 2 cars, cellar, security system, possible to sell with furniture. Price-negotiable.
- ◆ **3210 Aygestan community**, 2 stories, land: 480 sq.m, building: 310 sq.m, 1st floor is not repaired, garage, 2nd floor: repaired, kitchen, lavatory-tiled, permanent hot and cold water, Baxi system, a place for barbeque, garden, trees Price: 270.000 USD
- ◆ **3105. Kaskad, Antarain**, 4 stories, land 1800 sq.m., building 1000 sq.m., newly built, need of cosmetic repair, windows, permanent hot and cold water, heating system, 4 bedrooms, ramparted, solar lamps, security system, cameras, external lighting. Price: 1. 300.000 USD
- ◆ **3054. Blur, Kharkovyan street**, 3 storied building, land 400 sq.m., building 450 sq.m., new, euro repair, ramparted, 4 bedrooms, 5 lavatories inside, 2 lavatories outside, Baxi system. Price 800 000 USD
- ◆ **2916. Ashtarak highway**, village Nazrvan. 3 storied building. Land 3500 sq.m., building 760 sq.m., euro repair, 3 tiled lavatories, a sauna, billiard, permanent hot and cold water, gas, heating system, garden, pool, garage.The building is ramparted. Price 50000 USD

NEWLY BUILT

- ◆ **87. Sayat-Nova street**, newly built building Given to the operation in December 2012. Climate control, gas, the fasad sector has 3 bedrooms-188 sq.m, 199 sq.m, 1 sq.m- 1900 USD, 2 bedrooms have a beautiful sight- 117 sq.m, 120 sq.m, 124 sq.m, 1 sq.m-1700 USD Price: 1 sq.m-1900-1700 USD
- ◆ **90. Main avenue**, Newly built, 2 buildings, 14 stories. Ready for habitation at the end of 2013, at the beginning of 2014. Comercial areas on the 1st and on the 2nd floors, flats on the higher floors. Price: 1 sq.m.- 1150 USD 1 sq.m.- 1300 USD
- ◆ **91. Main Avenue**, Park, near Malibu cafe, 16storied newly building, Capitally repaired, heating and security system, 2 lavatories. Price: 1 sq.m.- 2.000 USD
- ◆ **93. Kievyan street**, newly built building Given to the operation in October 2011, gajats, windows, exterior doors, h -3, 15 m, gas supply, the second floor has a parking lot, parking is possible for sale. Price 12 000 USD possible with mortgage, for 13 years term
- ◆ **94. Masiv**, Newly built, , coupling, 8 flats, in each cottege 4 flats, totall-2000 sq.m, each flat has

2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 210 sq.m., parking: 80 sq.m. Price: 160 000 USD



FOR RENT

1 ROOMS

- ◆ **1031. Byuzand street**, 1 room, 34 sq.m, capitally repair, newly built, furniture, techniques, heating, AC, cabin. Price 600 USD
- ◆ **1009. Teryan str.**, 4/3, 1room changed into 2, 50sqm, euro repaired, furnished, permanent hot and cold water, gas, AC, spanish tiles, technique, ariston heating system. Price 800USD per month, 60USD per day
- ◆ **1057. Argishti str.**, 14/9, 1 room, furnished, heating system, permanent hot and cold water, AC
- ◆ **1005. Lalayanc str.**, 11/5, 1room changed into 2, euro repaired, furniture, permanent hot and cold water, gas, AC, spanish tiles, technique. Price 600USD per month, 40USD per day
- ◆ **1024. Amiryany street**, 12/3, 1turned into 2, 50 sq.m, euro repair, techniques. Price: 1 day 60 USD
- ◆ **853. Amiryany street**, 10/7. 1 turned into 2, 50 sq.m., euro repair, Italian furniture, bed, utensil, techniques, permanent water, gas, antenna, Baxy system. Price 700 USD, 50 USD per day

2 ROOMS

- ◆ **2064. Aygedzor**, 7/1. 2 rooms, 60 sq .m, capital repair, euro windows, Baxi system, AC, heating floor, camera, cabin. Price 800 USD
- ◆ **2037. Baghramyany str.**, 5/2, 60sqm, 1 bedroom, euro repaired, modern furniture, spanish tiles, permanent hot and cold water, gas, baxi, AC, technique. Price 100USD per day
- ◆ **2022. Amiryany street**, 4/3. 74 sq.m., 2 turned into 3, newly repaired, Spanish tiles, jakoozi, permanent hot and cold water, furniture, techniques. Price 1500 USD, 1 day 100 USD
- ◆ **2057. Sayat-Nova**, 11/4, 2 turned into 3, 78 sq.m., capitally repaired, Baxi system, furniture, techniques, AC, satellite. Price: 1 day- 80 USD, a month- 900 USD
- ◆ **1961. Tumanian street**, 4/2, 86sq.m., 1 bedroom, Euro repair, Euro windows, Furnished, permanent hot and cold water. Price: 1200 USD, 1day: 70USD
- ◆ **115. Buzand str. Building 7, /near Republic Square/,** 9/4, 75 sq.m, 2 rooms, newly built, capitally and euro repaired, furnished, equipped, permanent water, gas, heating system, AC, open balcony. Price: 1100 USD long-term, 1500 USD short-term.
- ◆ **2108. Amirtyan str. /City center/,** 2 rooms, AC, washing machine, TV, refrigerator, satellite, bed sheets, utensil, all the conveniences. Price: 600 USD , 60 USD per day
- ◆ **2099. Sayat-Nova Ave.**, 12/6, 2 rooms, all the conveniences, repaired, furnished, water, gas, Baxi heating system, AC, washing machine. Price: 550 USD

3 ROOMS AND MORE

- ◆ **1723. Northern Ave.** 8/4. 3 bedrooms, 170 sq.m., 3 bedrooms,3 bathrooms, newly built, repaired, furnished , open kitchen, Falcon system. Price: 2000 USD
- ◆ **1942. Teryan str.**, 4/2. 3 bedrooms, 120 sq.m, repaired, furnished kitchen, washing machine, AC, 2 bathrooms, open balcony. Price: 1200 USD
- ◆ **942. Teryan str.** 4/3. 2 bedrooms, 130 sq.m, concrete, Hgt. 3.50, loggia-2, tile/ital., renovation. Price: 1500 USD
- ◆ **1969. Amiryany str**, 12/11. 3 bedrooms, newly built, 180 sq.m, capitally repaired, furnished, 2 bathrooms, Baxi heating system installed, climate control. Price: 1700 USD
- ◆ **1970. Vazgen Sargsyan str.**, 10/8. 2 bedrooms, newly built,, 150 sq.m, capitally repaired, furnished, 2 bathrooms, climate control. Price: 2500 USD
- ◆ **1967. Pushkin str.**, 8/6. 2 bedrooms, newly built, 130 sq.m, capitally repaired, furnished. Price: 2000 USD
- ◆ **1966. Ekmalyan str.**, 10/5. 3 bedrooms, newly built, 170 sq.m, capitally repaired, furnished, 2 bathrooms, Baxi heating system installed. Price: 1300 USD
- ◆ **1951. Buzand/Mashtots crossroad.** /13, 2 bedrooms, newly built, 122 sq.m, capitally repaired, 2 bathrooms, furnished, heating system, climate control, usage fee included. Price: 2000 USD
- ◆ **1950. Buzand/Mashtots crossroad** /8, 2 bedrooms, newly built, 163 sq.m, capitally repaired, 2 bathrooms, furnished, heating system, climate control, open balcony, view to the garden, usage fee included. Price: 2500 USD
- ◆ **1137. Moskovyan str.**, 6/1, 2 bedrooms, lavatory, pool, normal state, furnished, technique, DVD, AC, permanent hot and cold water. Price 1100USD, possible daily rent.
- ◆ **1950 Crossroad of Khaniyan**, Mashtoc/8 2 bedrooms, New stored , 163 sq.m , absolutely repaired, 2 bathrooms, furniture, heating condition, Climate control, looks to the garden, including exploiting costs. Price 2500\$
- ◆ **1951 Crossroad of Khaniyan**, Mashtoc /13 2 bedrooms, New stored 122 sq.m absolutely repaired, 2 bathrooms, furniture, heating, Climate control, including exploiting costs . Price 2000\$
- ◆ **1790. Byuzand street**, close to Abovyan st., 7/5, newly built, 2bedrooms, euro repaired, 2 balconies, furnished, baxi, technique, 2 lavatories, garage. Price 1600USD per month.
- ◆ **1787. Koghbabci street**, 13/6, 2bedrooms, newly built, euro repaired, furnished, 2 lavatories, central heating. Price 1700USD per month, 100USD per day.
- ◆ **1793. Teryan street**, 260 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 3 lavatories, capital repair, climat control, parking, unfurnished (possible to furnish), newly built Price: 3500 USD
- ◆ **1564. Tumanyan street**, 7/4. 110 sq.m., euro repaire, 2 lavatories, Spanish tyles, permanent hot and cold water, gas, Baxi system, satellite, modern furniture, techniques, garage. Price 1200 USD.
- ◆ **1720. Amirian Street.**, 18/10, 2 bedrooms, 190 sq/m, newly built, euro windows, permanent hot and cold water, gas, central heating, 2 open balcony, nice view to the city, possible with or without furniture, parking for 3 cars. Price 3000USD per month negotiable, for long term - 6 months and more.

PRIVATE HOUSES

- ◆ **1094. Noy block**, 2 storied building - 400sqm, garden, permanent hot and cold water, furniture, technique, 1 lavatory, gas. Price 2000USD
- ◆ **1095. Aygestan**, 1 storied building - 105sqm, 3bedrooms newly built repaired, furniture, tech-



- nique 1 lavatory, garden. Price 1000USD per month, 100USD per day.
- ◆ **1808. Amiryany**, 4/3 3 rooms, 64 sq.m, capitally repaired, Venetian style, furnished, equipped, Spanish tiles, permanent hot and cold water, gas, baxi, no balcony. Price: 800-900 USD, 50 USD per day
- ◆ **971. Norq-Marash community** The gardens of Norq Ground 620sq.m, basement +2f. con 733.15 sq.m, basement: the sport hall, sauna, room for summer, swimming pool, fireplace, 1st floor: leaving room, bedroom, kitchen, office, corridor, bathroom, 2nd floor 4 bedrooms, 2 bathroom(Spanish), always running cold and hot water, natural gas, 2 conditioner, baxi. Price 1500\$
- ◆ **1096. Blur**, 4 storied building, each floor-160sqm, total-400sqm, euro repaired, 1st floor-garage, sport room, swimming pool, 4 bedrooms, summer kitchen, 3 lavatories, capitally repaired, furnished, gas, permanent hot and cold water. Price 4000USD
- ◆ **455. Norq**, 3 storied building-150sqm, total - 600sqm, 3bedrooms, lavatory, capitally repaired, furnished, technique, gas, permanent hot and cold water. Price 2000USD
- ◆ **1135. Monument V.** Papazyan street, 2floors, total-375sqm, stone building-210sqm, cellar, euro repaired, baxi, AC, garage-14sqm. Price 2000 USD per month.
- ◆ **1164. Arabkir, Monument**, 1 storied, land-300 sq.m, building-150 sq.m., capitally repaired, 3 bedrooms, 2 lavatories, pool. Price: 1200 USD
- ◆ **211. Ajgedzor**, 2 storied, 3 bedrooms, permanent water, capitally repaired, beutfull view. Price: 1300-1500 USD
- ◆ **721. Blur Qery street**, land 150 sq.m., 2 stories+ a cellar, 200 sq.m., newly built, telephone, refrigerator, washing machine, 3 bedrooms, garage, 2 lavatories, a pool, camin, permanent hot and cold water, a cellar is used as a sport hall. Price : 3000 USD
- ◆ **1117. Aygestan**, land-420 sq.m., building 646 sq.m., 3 storied, 4 bedrooms, open kitchen, euro repair, new tiles, furnished, techniques. Price* 5000 USD
- ◆ **1121. Vahagni community**, 2 stories, building 402 sq.m.(including garage and cellar) euro repair, 3 bedrooms, hall, permanent hot and cold water, gas, heating system, heating floor, kitchen and dining room are furnished. Price: 3000 USD
- ◆ **1142. Dirvej**, Bagrevand community. 3 storied, land-1000 sq.m., building-700 sq.m., 1st floor-cellar, pantry, playing room, kitchen, lavatory, 2nd floor- a big hall, kitchen, dining room, 4 bedrooms,

3rd floor- resting room, 1 bedroom repaired, each bedroom has its lavatory, no furniture/ can be furnished, if necessary/garage for 2 cars, parquet, Spanish tiles. Price: 4 000 USD.

- ◆ **1114. Gulakyan street**, 3 storied building 500 sq.m., euro repair, 1st floor: sauna, a pool, kitchen, 2nd floor: kitchen, dining room, 3rd floor 3 bedrooms, lavatories in each floor. Price: 3300 USD
- ◆ **1109. Blur**, 3 storied building, land 400 sq.m., building 450 sq.m., new, euro repair, ramparted, 4 bedrooms, 5 lavatories inside, 2 lavatories outside, Baxi system. Price 3800 USD
- ◆ **662. Norq gardens**, Amaranocayin street. 2 storied stone building.Land 1000 sq.m., building 300 sq.m., ramparted, 3 lavatories, 3 bedrooms, hall, camin, gas, heating system, stained glasses. Price 3000USD negotiable
- ◆ **1071. Noy block**, 2.5 storied, land 400 sq.m., building 500 sq.m., garden 250sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 5 lavatories, 2 kitchen, a hall. Price 3000 USD prliminary
- ◆ **1085. Aygestan destrict**, 2 storied stone building, land 500 sq.m., each floor 12 X 14, 3 bedrooms, a cabinet, 3 lavatories, a cellar, a sauna, kitchen with cupboards, Baxi system, AC. Price 3000 USD
- ◆ **1139. Komitas, Sundukyan street**, 2 stories, stone building, land : 700 sq.m, each floor 185 sq.m, 4 bedrooms, cellar 185 sq.m., , capital repair, Baxi system, swimming pool, a place for barbeque, 2 lavatories, garden, 1 cabinet. Price: 3000 USD
- ◆ **333. Nork**, 3 storied, 250sqm, euro repair, 4 bedrooms/7 lavatory, permanent hot and cold water, central heating, natural gas, garden, pool. Price negotiable.
- ◆ **1014. Norq Marash district**, 2 storied, a cellar, capitally repaired, land 567sq.m., building 551 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 1 cabinet, furnished, a heating system. Price 2500 USD primary.
- ◆ **1076. Nork**, 2 storied, 220 sq.m., euro repair, in the 1st floor 2 rooms, kitchen, lavatory, in the second floor, separate entrance, open kitchen, 3 bedrooms, lavatory, furnished, view to city, garage, garden. Price: 2000USD
- ◆ **990. In Monument, Papazian street**, 2 storied stone building + half-cellar, has mansard,5bedrooms, 2 kitchens, 2bathrooms, laundry, permanent hot and cold water, gas, plot of land 250sq.m, the size of whole construction is 370 sq.m. Price 2500USD
- ◆ **1019. Nork**, 2 storied, separate structure, 700 sq.m. land, 350 sq.m. construction, capital euro repaired, firmished, garage with remote control, pool, 3 bedrooms, one with bathroom, and 2 separate bathrooms. In the first floor sitting-room, gas, permanent hot and cold water, Baxi System, fireplace, view to town, walled. Price: Negotiable

PREMISES

- ◆ **1869. Kaskade**, 720 sq.m., 1st line, building permission, suitable for new building or a business center. Price: negotiable
- ◆ **1693. Malatia-Sebastia**, 4rh floor., repaired, stone building, 2 entries, no artificial walls separating the territory, climate control, 2 elevators, storage space at the ground floor, parking, two-sided parking in the street. 1200 sq.m. Price: 10.000 USD
- ◆ **1821. Argishti** 14/7 3rooms,.87sq.m repaired.-modern stile ,non populated ,2bathroom.heating /furniture ,technique satellite, when renting for the long time also internet, b. looks to the country. Price 800\$, 1day 20.000AMD dram
- ◆ **1438. Komitas**, Hr. Kochar str., 6storied building + cellar + cockloft, total-960sqm, each floor-120sqm, needs to be repaired, plastered, permanent hot and cold water, gas, parking for 15 cars. Price negotiable.
- ◆ **1525. Hanrapetutyany street**, 1st floor, 3steps up, h-3.20m, repaired, 1 large hall+3 rooms, 2 entrances, kithen, lavatory. Price 1400USD per month, negotiable.
- ◆ **1526. Byuzand street**, 5/semi-basement, 170sqm, 4-5 step down. cellar-50sqm, has 6 rooms, the largest is 30sqm, 2 entrances, 2 lavatories, 6 windows from street side. Price 2000USD per month, negotiable.
- ◆ **1528. North Avenue**, 9/1, 2 floors, total area 159sqm, 1st floor-66sqm, 2nd floor 93sqm, newly built, euro repaired, has the entrance from the street, security system, heating system. Price 7500USD per month.
- ◆ **1482. North Avenue**, 210 sq.m., 1st floor, with 2 floors, h=8m. Price 10.000 USD
- ◆ **1113. Abovyan Koryun district**, 2 storied, 400 sq.m., 2 separate entrances, capital euro repair, convenient for restaurant or shop, has a possibility for open air café. Price: Negotiable
- ◆ **1408.Zarobyan street**, parallel to Baghramyany, 2 storied, 300sq.m.construction, 600 sq.m. land, in a first floor hall and kitchen, in a second floor 5 rooms, bathroom, open balcony, capital euro repair, gas, baxi system, permanent hot and cold water, telephone, garage, fruit garden. Price: Negotiable.
- ◆ **1438. Komitas**, 6 floors, cellar, mansard. Each floor is 120 sq.m., hasa need for cosmetic repair, walls are plastered, floor is leveled, hanging ceilings, permanent hot and cold water, gas, parking for 15 cars. Price: Negotiable
- ◆ **1461. Amiryany** (down-town), 1st circle, 5 stored building, 300sq.m is renovated, the rest is under renovation, central heating, climate-control, parking. (tax included) . The price is available for 5 and more years, 2500sq. Price: 1sqm - 40USD
- ◆ **1462. Teryan street**, 3 stored, capital repaired, AC, capital repaired, parking, 800sq. Price:

Seyran Ohanyan: "The Real Peacekeeping Operation is Also That Has Been Carried Out in Karabakh"

In his working visit to the United States the RA Defense Minister had quite unprecedented agenda



By Gourgen
James Khazhakian
Chief Correspondent

In The Highlights previous issue we put a sizeable story on the expectations from the visit of the RA Defense Ministry delegation led by Minister **Seyran M. Ohanyan** to the United States. Being based on the Defense Ministry official infos as well as The Highlights military sources, now, when our militaries are back home, we could say that this very saturated trip is a success. And it seems us quite natural as within mere four-five days Minister Ohanyan and his delegation members have had very high level and, importantly, circumstantial meetings/talks in Kansas, New York – UN headquarters, Washington, DC – with the Chiefs of Pentagon, CIA, State Department.

But let's begin from the beginning.

In the State of Kansas

On March 20 the RA Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan had discussions with Adjutant General of Kansas Major General Lee Tafanelli, President of the Senate of Kansas Stephen Morris, and Mike O'Neal, the Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives. Education system of The United States Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) as well as Expeditionary Medical Support system capacities were presented to the RA Defense Minister.

During the meeting with the Governor of Kansas **Sam Brownback** the high level of cooperation between Armenia and Kansas was registered and the prospective of broadening and deepening cooperation within the State Partnership Program was outlined. The Governor signed a Declaration of Cooperation between Armenia and the State of Kansas which particularly says that "...Kansas is proud to announce the progress made over the last 9 years of cooperation between Armenia and Kansas in the framework of the State Partnership Program. Kansas appreciates the high level of duty service performed by the Armenian Armed Forces service members and overcoming adversities they faced alongside with American and NATO forces in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Kansas is committed to ensuring the continuance of the long-term exceptional cooperation and its further broadening with Armenia. In the framework of the partnership Armenia and Kansas stand side by side for the sake of peace, prosperity, and freedom".

Well put, isn't it?

In New York

From March 21-22 the delegation headed by the RA Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan was in New York.

Seyran Ohanyan met UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs **Angela Kane**. During the meeting the Armenian side intro-



duced approaches regarding issues of counter-terrorism strategy, conventional arms, Arms Trade Treaty, military expenditures and budget, prevention and elimination of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and regional disarmament as well. During the joint working consultations with the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for the

In Washington, DC

And the culmination of the trip to the US became Minister Ohanyan's meetings in the United States capital city, and, first of all, with the American counterpart Secretary of Defense **Leon Panetta** on March 23.

During the meeting they dis-

cluding Armenia's efforts on defense reform and U.S. willingness to support enhanced training of the Armenian military".

In Washington the RA Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan also met Director of the Central Intelligence Agency **David Petraeus**, Undersecretaries of State **Philip Gordon** and

Vardanian, who, to note, today is an Adviser to the RA Defense Minister – another evidence of rapidly changing times!), and a key "puzzle" for the gathered there analysts/media people was smth like "Could Armenia, as an independent state, survive under current conditions?". And the answer was following, smth like "Yes, but if the right balance (with the external world) is found".

The answer was a "simple" one, but the implementation is not easy, not at all...

But we have no choice, so having signed a document on prolongation of the Russian military presence (which still, - despite thousands possible and impossible counter-arguments, seems to the majority of the world-spread Armenians the best, if not the only guarantee for the Nation's physical existence, - especially after our "sworn" neighbor Turkey failed "normalization" Protocols) up to 49 years, we should to strengthen our partnership with the "opposite" side, i.e. the West and its leader America, especially in the army-building: new approaches in the management and especially adoption of the new Disciplinary Code of the Armenian Armed Forces, legislative package of professional NCO corps formation, documents on military education and other similar things are very urgent issues for THE ARMENIAN VICTORIOUS ARMY, which, alas, today encounters almost every day very undesirable and even tragic accidents.

So on March 29, as the RA DM Press and Information Service says, the annual meeting in the format of Political and Partnerships Committee + Armenia was held at the NATO Headquarters in Brussels. During the meeting the delegation headed by the RA First Deputy Defense Minister **Davit Tonoyan** (who accompanied Minister Ohanyan in his trip to America) and NATO member and partner countries' reps at the Committee discussed defense reforms underway in Armenia and recent initiatives for defense legislation amendment. They, particularly, touched upon the recent significant progress in various processes including the adoption of the new Disciplinary Code of the Armed Forces, legislative package of professional NCO corps formation, "Military Education Concept" as well as peacekeeping capability building. The Alliance expressed its readiness to further support reforms in the defense and security sector, Defense Ministry Press and Infoservice says.

Coming back to a quite impressive visit of the Armenian military leadership to the United States, we will do our best to find out more details from The Highlights relevant sources.

The US Department of Defense photographs by Erin Kirk-Cuomo



Department of Peacekeeping Operations **Dmitry Titov** and Policy and Planning Department officials they discussed issues of the Armenian troops' further participation in UN-led peacekeeping operations and the cooperation to enhance humanitarian demining capacities. In the course of the visit the delegation was accompanied by Permanent Representative



of Armenia to UN Ambassador **Karen Nazaryan**.

To note, in spite of being very busy, Minister Seyran Ohanyan found a time to meet reps of the Armenian community, who, expectedly, warmly greeted Minister Ohanyan, one of the architects of OUR VICTORY in Karabakh.

cussed issues of the bilateral cooperation in defense sector and the regional security. Leon Panetta appraised the reforms underway in the Armenian Armed Forces and reassured US readiness to provide support in that sphere. Secretary of Defense also thanked the Armenian side for the essential support in the NATO-led peacekeeping operations have been

held in Kosovo and Afghanistan. In turn, the RA Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan stressed that Armenia is to take solid measures to implement the RA Armed Forces Development Program relying on the full support of all partners including USA. Minister Ohanyan also reassured the readiness of the Armenian peacekeepers to continue to participate in the Inter-

national Coalition Operations.

Notably, Ohanyan The Karabakh war hero said (half-jokingly) that "The real peacekeeping operation that has been implemented in Karabakh" (!!! – G.Kh.). As **George Little**, Pentagon Press Secretary said, "... the two leaders discussed U.S.-Armenian defense cooperation in-

Andrew Shapiro, - to discuss Armenia's defense sector reforms as well as regional developments. Naturally, in his Washington meetings Minister Ohanyan was accompanied by the RA Ambassador to the US Dr **Tatul Margaryan**.

...Could Soviet officer Seyran Ohanyan (as well as some other members of the delegation - fmr So-

viet servicemen) imagine, let's say, a quarter century ago, that a day will come when he meets, as an equal counterpart, with the US Defense Secretary, or, especially, CIA Director?

Well, we think - scarcely.

But the time has been changing, and today we are an independent state which has found (or re-found) itself



in a very, if not to say - extremely complicated geopolitical situation.

...Some twenty years ago a colleague told me that he participated a discussion in Tsakhadzor organized by a newly established research institute "Hayk" (founded and presided by the ex-Chief of the "Radio Liberty" Armenian Service **Babken Ken**

From now on **Fiori** has his box in **Mezzo**

The famous French singer Patrick Fiori (Chouchayan) will give a concert at the Mezzo Club in Yerevan on March 31.



"I am proud of being an Armenian. The Armenian music, the flavors and aromas of Armenia have made my life," the singer told a press conference preceding the concert. "I remember the aroma of the coffee my grandmother used to make. And I am deeply moved by the hospitality that both my friends and me are offered here," Fiori stressed.



This is the French-Armenian singer's second visit to Armenia. He paid his first visit to our country in 2004. When sharing his impressions from the first visit, Patrick Fiori recalled an incident when a woman approached him in Etchmiadzin. "She was smiling at me, and I thought that she was going to ask for money. Naturally this did not happen: she approached me and said something in Armenian, which I did not understand. My father translated her words: 'You are a very good man'. In the woman's eyes, I re-found what I had heard from my grandmother: warmth and kindness. This was my first impression of this country, which touched me to the innermost of my heart," Fiori said.

The singer does not know Armenian and considers it a difficult language for himself. However, he wrote a song in Armenian. "Once I saw Henri Verneuil's film Mayrik, its Armenian music made a great impression on me," Fiori said and began to sing quietly that song for the journalists. He wrote

the lyrics of the song that expressed his memories of the visit to Armenia. "The song is called 'Les montagnes de l'Armenie' (The Mountains of Armenia)".

This song is about the story of my family and the pain of the Armenian people," Patrick Fiori noted. He informed those present that during the Yerevan concert he would perform this song as well as the song 'Belle' from the famous musical Notre Dame de Paris that gave him international fame. "By the way, the duduk is played at all my con-



certs," Fiori said.

Speaking about the concert scheduled to take place at the Mezzo Club on March 31, Patrick Fiori noted that at the beginning of the concert he will perform together with Raffi, an 11-year-old talented boy who was born into an Armenian family living in France. "All that he plays he has learned without a teacher - by ear," Fiori said.



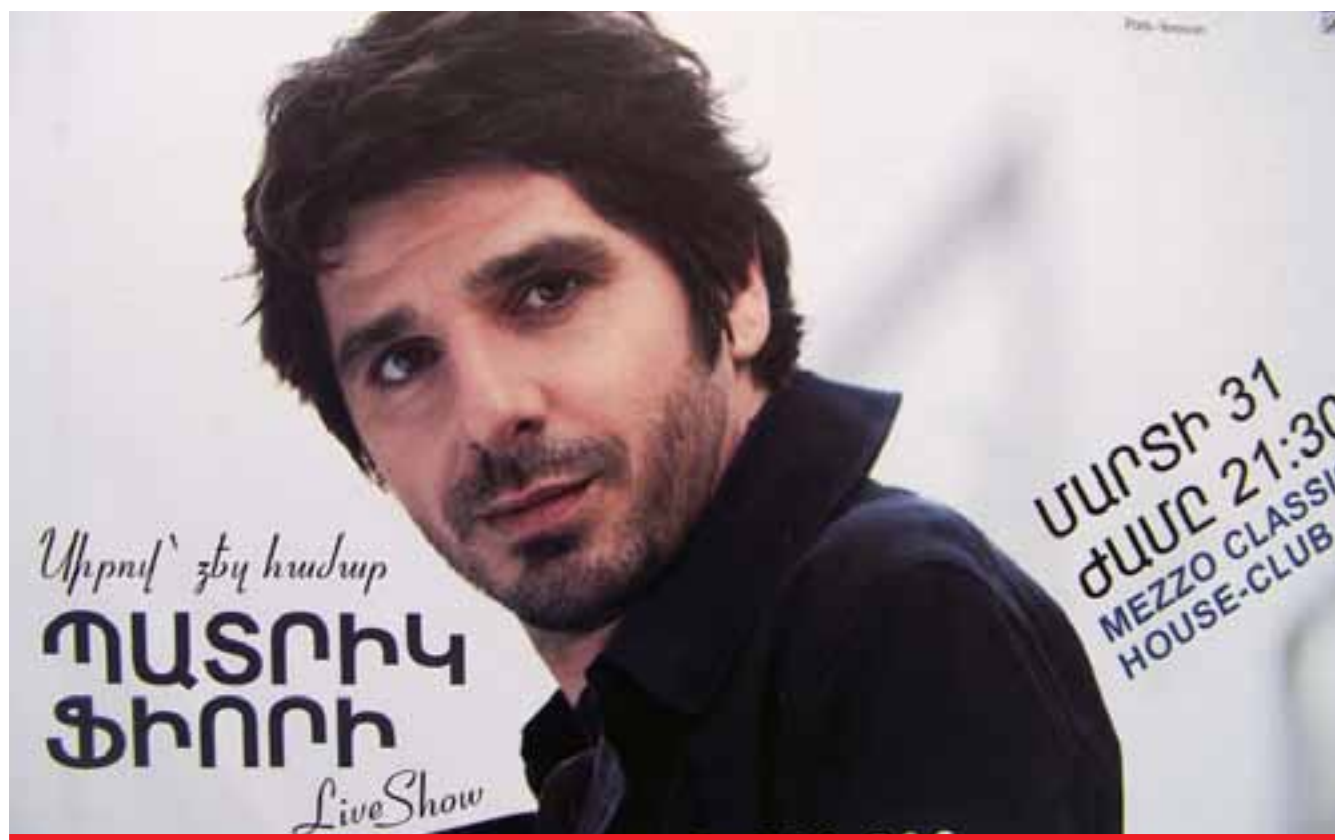
Patrick Fiori will perform for an hour, but he promised to visit Armenia again in the near future. "I will come either alone or with other singers of the

musical Notre Dame De Paris. I know for sure that you will not forget me," the singer stated.

In the words of Fiori, he has been on tour for 18 months and he is glad that the concert in Yerevan marks the end of the tour. "This was a good opportunity to visit Armenia and meet the Armenian audience once again," he remarked. The singer will then travel to Lebanon and Russia to give concerts, after which he will record a new album. From October 2013 to March 2014,

Fiori will again tour various countries.

According to the organizers of the Yerevan concert of Patrick Fiori, this concert is the singer's present to his female fans.





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**The newly-opened
Kaissa chess school**
organizes paid training courses for
schoolchildren and announces admission.

The courses start on March 15.
Applications will be accepted starting February 1, 2012.

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UN and NCFA to attract funds for Tatev's development



UN Resident Coordinator in Armenia Dafina Gercheva and Executive Director of the National Competitiveness Foundation of Armenia (NCFA) Arman Khachaturyan signed a coopera-

tion memorandum on developing communities in Tatev and neighboring villages and attracting funds for the implementation of the programs.

Dafina Gercheva said that the

funds will be meant for the implementation of the 4-year program for developing the Tatev village community worked out by the UN Armenian Office and NCFA in January 2012, Mediamax reports.

The program is meant for developing tourism infrastructures and opening new workplaces in Tatev and neighboring villages.

Arman Khachaturyan said that the program cost USD1.6mln and 20% of the sum would be funded by the UN. He noted that they would start taking measures aimed at attracting funds from international structures and representatives of private and public sectors already in April.

Armenia may receive \$56 million from IMF in May



An International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission led by Mr. Mark Horton visited Yerevan during March 14-27 to conduct discussions for the Fourth Review of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF)/Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangements.

The Executive Board of the IMF is tentatively scheduled to consider completion of the review in May 2012. Upon approval the IMF would disburse the fourth tranche of the loan for an amount of about US\$56 million, bringing disbursements under the arrangement to SDR 181 million (about US\$279 million).

At the conclusion of the visit, Mark Horton issued the following statement:

"Despite a less supportive external environment, overall macroeconomic conditions have continued to improve. The economy is expected to have grown by 4.4 percent in

2011, driven by strong growth in the industry and services sectors. Inflation has significantly moderated to below 4 percent in February (year-over-year), supported by a sound monetary framework. External imbalances have moderated, through continuing fiscal adjustment as well as strong export and remittances growth, but the external current account deficit remains relatively large and further adjustment is needed to reduce vulnerabilities.

Policy performance remained in line with the program during the second half of 2011, with all quantitative performance criteria met at end-2011. The fiscal situation considerably strengthened, with the overall deficit being reduced significantly in 2011 from nearly 5 percent in 2010. The authorities have displayed commendable prudence regarding the amounts and terms of new debt, including by focusing on

a possible private sector-led solution for the ailing chemical factory Nairit. The government is on track to achieve a substantial increase in tax collections in 2012 which would help create fiscal space to address the urgent needs of supporting private sector-led growth and reducing poverty.

The government and Central Bank of Armenia also met or made substantial progress on all structural benchmarks under the program. Important technical steps regarding tax administration have been achieved, potentially laying the groundwork for a more modern, effective and business-friendly tax administration. There has also been progress in laying out tax policy strategies for the next few years, in further strengthening the inflation targeting framework, in consolidating financial stability and in bolstering the effectiveness of the provision of social services.

Against the backdrop of weak external environment, the growth projection was reduced to 3.8 percent in 2012 with risks tilted to the downside. In light of expected absence of further pressures in international prices, inflation is expected to remain around the Central Bank's target. With continued fiscal consolidation over the medium-term, the authorities' welcome focus on export growth and other business environment improvements, strong remittances, and exchange rate flexibility, the current account deficit is expected to continue to decline".

Promotion of IT sector in Armenian market is set to involve world renowned companies

Information Technologies sector promote services 2012 program was submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The program will be on the agenda of the executive body on March 29 session, Armenpress reports citing Government official web site.

The cooperation with the countries registering success in IT sector, cooperation verifying and

extension with relevant international organizations, exchange of experience, expansion of cooperation with Diaspora, investment involvement, implementation of targeted long-term projects are stimulated by the program. World famous IT companies are expected to make investments in Armenian market.

Professional capacity development sector will be realized within

the program, particularly provide of Microsoft innovation Center, organizing of various trainings, seminars and other events, provide of Cisco Networking Academy activities, mutual retraining course conduction with Intel Organization as well as implementation of the events with IT sector international organizations stipulated by the memoranda.

GEF to provide \$1.82 million for Energy Efficiency Project in Armenia

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors on March 27 approved a US\$1.82 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund for the Energy Efficiency Project for Armenia. The project will help to reduce energy consumption of social and other public facilities.

This project will support energy efficiency investments in schools, kindergartens, hospitals, administrative buildings, and street lighting and will reduce energy consumption of retrofitted public and social facilities as well as CO2 emissions.

"We are pleased that children and hospital patients, students, employees and users of administrative buildings will be the main beneficiaries of the proposed energy efficiency investments," said Jean-Michel Happi, World Bank Country Manager for Armenia. "Armenia will start reaping the benefits of energy efficiency through reduced energy costs, improved comfort levels, and upgraded facilities."

The World Bank's Energy Efficiency Study for Armenia (2008) estimated that the public sector can save around 132 billion Armenian Drams (more than US\$360 million), 130 million kWh of energy equivalent annually, and 35 percent of estimated total energy consumption. The energy audits conducted for eight public facilities as well as energy efficiency investments in eleven schools under the World Bank supported Urban Heating Project, suggest that an average facility could save around 150,000 KWh of energy per year by investing an average of US\$70,000 with payback of three to eight years.

"By supporting energy efficiency investments in around 120 schools, hospitals and other public facilities, the project will seek to

develop, test and disseminate replicable and sustainable models for energy efficiency service provision. Energy efficiency investments in social and other public facilities can also help stimulate the market by creating demand for energy efficient equipment and services," said Ani Balabanyan, Head of the World Bank team designing the project.

The project will finance insulation of walls, basements and attics, repair/replacement of external doors and windows, window optimization, reflective surfacing of walls behind radiators, improvement/replacement of boilers and heating systems, as well as replacement of mercury vapor lamps with high-pressure sodium vapor lamps.

The replicability of energy efficiency investments will be ensured through: removal of existing legal, regulatory, procurement and information barriers to energy efficiency in public sector; development and testing of various financing, implementation and repayment schemes for similar sub-projects; training for public agencies to support with implementation of energy efficiency policies and regulations; and capacity building for private sector stakeholders to strengthen their capacity in carrying out energy audits, energy management, and financial appraisal of energy efficiency investments.

The project will be supported by US\$8.3 million from the Government funding, US\$1.82 million from the GEF grant, and US\$0.54 million co-financing from the Renewable Resources and Energy Efficiency Fund (R2E2 Fund). The Government funding will include repayments of the revolving funds under the recently completed World Bank supported Urban Heating and Renewable Energy projects.

Visa Processing Fees to Change on April 13, 2012

Effective April 13, 2012, the Department of State will adjust visa processing fees. The fees for most nonimmigrant visa applications and Border Crossing Cards will increase, while all immigrant visa processing fees will decrease, reports Armenpress citing US Department of State press center.

The Department is required to recover, as far as possible, the cost of processing visas through the collection of application fees. For a number of reasons, the current fees

no longer cover the actual cost of processing nonimmigrant visas. The nonimmigrant visa fee increase will support the addition and expansion of overseas facilities, as well as additional staffing required to meet increased visa demand.

Although most categories of nonimmigrant visa processing fees will increase, the fee for E visas (treaty-traders and treaty-investors) and K visas (for fiancé (e)s of U.S. citizens) will decrease.



Armen Yeritsyan, Minister of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia, Major General, Doctor of Law, Professor: “We Have Created Image of a Rescuer Whom the People Believe, Trust and Expect”

By Gourgen James Khazhakian
Chief correspondent

- Mr Minister, we all are impressed by the recent really selfless deed of your rescuer firemen: in stormy weather, they walked 6 kilometers, carrying a pregnant woman in a stretcher down a snow-covered impassable road and saved her life...

- Awarding them was one of the pleasant moments in my work. (See the pics 4 and 5 on this page). I am very proud and glad that we have such heroic employees, but I am concerned about the fact that our technical equipment is still far from the required standards. All-terrain vehicles, tractors, helicopters, planes, also unmanned underground and underwater search devices are the technical means we need constantly in our day-to-day operations, and I hope, or ... more exactly, I am sure that we will have all necessary equipment. Presently we have the most important thing: we have created the real image of a professional, devoted rescuer-firemen who is committed to his cause and the Homeland and whom the people love, trust, believe, and expect to see. They are ordinary people, but are at the same time people of a special mould: they are rescuers to the backbone, rescuers by vocation. You know, it is not easy to endanger your own life and health in order to save the life, property, and health of another person. Their salaries are not high. I highly appreciate and respect my officers. The consciousness of the honor and dignity of an officer is the moral basis and pillar of the general atmosphere in our Ministry and our attitude to work. In the abovementioned case our rescuer firemen received financial rewards. Those who fight against natural disasters, walk many kilometers carrying a heavy stretcher without a murmur, give their warm clothes to a pregnant woman in a frosty weather, must feel the appreciation and careful attitude of their superior, the Minister, and the State. I was pleasantly surprised to see the response of the public: after the news spread, a businessman came to me and expressed his readiness to provide financial assistance to those rescuers.

- Mr Minister, recently there has been a big deal of talk about Armenia's Ministry of Emergency Situations, and people often use superlatives when expressing an opinion about the Ministry... The international organizations too, have started to single out Armenia (owing to the Ministry) as the regional country which has the best experience in disaster risk reduction...

- Our country suffered the Spitak earthquake '88 and is at a high risk of natural and man-made disasters so Armenia must have a powerful and competent Ministry of Emergency Situations. When I was appointed Minister of Emergency Situations two years ago - in March of 2010, we had neither a building nor proper working conditions. Today we have a large "Emergency City" in Davitashen District of Yerevan and all the divisions of the Ministry function under the same roof after being reformed and streamlined. The Ministry has become a structure with the common goal and vision.

We are very much aware that it is impossible to overcome the existing challenges with efforts of only one ministry, no matter how powerful and competent it is. So today we move forward, trying to keep pace with the times. We were the first in the region to report making progress in the implementation of the Hugo Framework for Action (HFA), a program, by which the world's leading countries try to unite forces of all countries in order to reduce the human, social, and environmental damage that disasters have done to various states and communities. We were also the first

in the region to develop the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR). NPDRR has the status of a Foundation and its activities have already aroused interest of international organizations and various counties. As a result of Armenia's serious progress in a short time, the United Nations recognized it as a country of achievements and the best experience, and



last year experts and officials from more than 20 countries and numerous international organizations visited the RA Ministry of Emergency Situations to familiarize themselves with our experience. We told them about the path we have followed so far, our difficulties, failures, achievements, the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, the National Strategy of Disaster Risk Reduction, the Crisis Management Center, 911 service, and the disaster risk reduction database.

- I would like you to speak at greater length about the Crisis Management Center where you've just led us and whose technical equipment and software as well as the presentable (and even beautiful, -the Ladies) staff, well, leaves no visitor indifferent... (See the pic 2 on this page).

- You know, I attach much importance to our rescuer-firemen, their technical equipment, training, and readiness. We have even set up,



-with assistance from the RA Defense Ministry, a special landing group of 25 paratroopers. Equipped with parachutes, they can come to people's aid even in most hard-to-reach areas. However, unless you have a management body, a center for collection, processing and dissemination of information, unless in the 21st century you have and use information technology and complex programs, unless you have a complete database on your country, as well as various kinds of disaster risk maps, unless you can - in case of a crisis or an emergency situation - assemble all the ruling potential of the country, prior to that informing, instructing and training them and conducting joint discussions and exercises with them, any ordeal will become a misfortune and disaster for your country.

For this reason the Crisis Management Center (CMC) became one of the important tasks facing me, not to say, the top priority. I myself visited France, Switzerland, Russia, and Belarus to study their experience; we cooperated with the United Nations, NATO, the United States, Japan, and many other

countries, we did a lot of work, but when we reached the summit of the mountain, we realized that it was just the first stage of our long, difficult, although interesting way. Swiss experts and Austrian ones permanently work at our Ministry by combing the world's best experience with our own. On the other hand, we try to use the domestic potential of our ministries,



departments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

Today the Crisis Management Center of the Ministry of Emergency Situations already plays an important part in the life of our society through its website that performs various



functions such as notifying, advisory, warning, and instructive functions - more functions than a usual website. The installation of five new-generation seismic stations with the assistance of Japanese specialists and the immedi-



ate transfer of their data to the CMC has become an important step for notification of the population, prevention of panic during a disaster, and seismic protection in general. This will enable to notify the population within a few



minutes (instead of previous 30-50 minutes) of the magnitude and place of an earthquake.

- Mr Minister, we understand clearly and you, too, often say that a rescue operation is an expensive treat, not to mention modern technology and programs. Armenia is a developing country, which probably does not provide considerable finan-

cial resources. Even many developed countries start financing this sphere only in case of dire necessity. How do you cope with this, in general, what inspires optimism and hope in you?

- Your arguments are convincing and disarming, but I should say that it is not the obstacles and difficulties (no matter how insurmountable they may seem), but is it the vision



of a disaster-resistant country whose citizens are notified and well-prepared that moves us forward. We are unifying the potential of the country, including potential of central state and local self-government bodies, non-governmental organizations, private

enterprises, scientific communities, the mass media, international organizations, etc., - around this idea. On the other hand we cooperate with all international organizations and various countries, - from the United States to Japan. Citizens of France, Germany, the U.S., Sweden, Switzerland, and Brazil, as well as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, and the Council of Europe have provided assistance to us.

Just imagine: Armenia, which has not purchased a single fire engine after the Spitak earthquake and had a fleet of 25-30-year-old vehicles, at



once, has received 28 brand new fire engines as a donation. The donation of Japan was displayed in Republic Square (See a pic on page 11) and gave rise to a new culture. During forest fires in Russia, 28 Armenian firemen in four vehicles donated by Japan saved several Russian villages enveloped in flames.

President of the Russian Federation personally presented awards to our rescuers and expressed his gratitude to Armenian President for the selfless actions of the Armenian rescuers. When, on the instructions of the President, we were sending aid to residents of the City of Van (currently - Turkey -

G.Kh) hit by an earthquake, we said once again that Armenia has now turned from a country importing aid and rescuers in 1988 to a country that exports aid, rescuers, skills and knowledge to other countries: Iran, Turkey, Indonesia, India, Russia, on so on.

In order to remain abreast of the world, speak the same language as developed and advanced countries, and

implement joint programs with them, we should be able to successfully cooperate, present competitive ideas and projects, so we do our best to preserve the reputation which we have gained because there is keen competition in this field, too.

We work in literally day-to-day cooperation with Swiss partners by implementing Echo project, which is also of an educational nature, and now we have not only firemen, but also highly qualified rescuers. This cooperation has already entered the second stage under the subtitle "Disaster Medicine". With the support from Swiss specialists, we have provided training to doctors in three Armenian Marzes (provinces), instructing them how to act most efficiently in an emergency. Today we already have registered doctors, trained to render medical aid to our rescue teams during a disaster. We also launched a program of cooperation with French experts. Let me tell you about an interesting case. In France, some rescuer-firemen work on a voluntary basis. Since, unfortunately, our state lacks funds to keep rescue teams in all regions of the Republic, we decided to adopt French experience and very soon we will have a voluntary rescue team in each Marz. We will supervise these volunteers responsible for conducting preliminary operations during a fire before the fire engines reach the scene. We have also signed bilateral agreements with our French colleagues. These agreements are related to civil defense and continue developing year by year. In addition, we have reached an agreement with our American partners, in accordance with which our employees of 911 Service will undergo retraining in the United States. The Americans have wide experience as 911 Service as it has been functioning there since 1985. We appreciate highly our cooperation with Japanese partners; this cooperation covers various areas, from rescue operations to seismic risk assessment and notification of the population.

The French and U.S. partners also installed seismic stations in Armenia, thanks to which we receive information about the ongoing processes in Earth interior. Much work on government reserves has been carried out. It is obvious that we need such reserves not only in the state of war, but also during natural disasters.

- Let's return to 911 Service. Why 911 and not 112? How urgent was it, - to set up this Service?

- Other countries have long ago come to the conclusion (and our experience also suggests) that in most cases, accidents require a complex response, including services of rescuers, policemen, doctors, electricians, gasmen, psychologists, etc., and for a long time there was a need in Armenia to coordinate efforts of these organizations. Instead of forcing the person in need to turn to various organizations, it is enough to give a telephone number, and after dialing it that a person will immediately receive all necessary assistance. I told our dispatchers: never say: "You have dialed a wrong number", you have to answer all the questions. At first it is difficult, but everything will be all right. The main thing is that our population has become familiar with 911 and trusts this service. We decided to call it "911" for PR purposes because 911 television sequels is popular in our country. Our viewers will soon have the opportunity to watch every day a television program about day-to-day activities of Armenia's 911 Service.

- Please tell us about Ministry's Academy.

- The Crisis Management State Academy prepares rescuers and firemen-rescuers, as well as experts in civil defense. Civil defense is an important sphere in social life. It aims to educate the public how to behave

continued on page 11

Armen Yeritsyan, Minister of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia, Major General, Doctor of Law, Professor: "We Have Created Image of a Rescuer Whom the People Believe, Trust and Expect"

from page 10

most correctly during a disaster.

- What challenges are currently facing the Ministry headed by you?

- Both natural and technological hazards, environmental, epidemiological, and social disasters, and finally, the threat of war are the challenges facing our country and the world in general, the challenges immediately relevant to us. Of course, I can also point out the financial problems, technical equipment, software, and the lack of qualified personnel. Just imagine – you train a young specialist, send him/her abroad to acquire knowledge and experience, and some time later that specialist finds another, higher paying job. Yet the global challenges to be overcome by joint efforts are related to human consciousness, everybody from government officials to millionaires and ordinary citizens should realize that less investment, knowledge and skills are required to prevent an impending disaster or at least to reduce the impact of its consequences and relieve the pain and sufferings of people than to eliminate the consequences and do reconstruction work after the disaster. Our slogan is: "He who is notified is protected".

- Tell us about your working day, please. How does it start and when does it end?

- I arrive at work at 8:30 am. Every day at 9 am, written reports on the events which have taken place are submitted, and naturally the most important issues are immediately dealt with. My working day ends at 10 pm. Sunday is my day off.



- I have heard a lot about your career as a professional sportsman: you were a judo wrestler, your hobbies include underwater swimming and skiing, and you drive various vehicles on water, snow, and land. I recall that even foreign newspapers reported that the Armenian Minis-

ter of Emergency Situations on his watercycle came to the rescue of the passengers of a boat that had capsized. You are also the President of the Skiing Federation of Armenia. Please tell us a couple of words on this.

- I have been serving as President of the Skiing Federation of Armenia for seven years and I should note that our skiers will get themselves talked about. There is still much to be done in this field. In general, sports play an important role in all fields because without good physical training, peo-



ple lack strength, willpower, and endurance to work hard. As regards our rescuer-firemen, the proper physical and psychological preparedness is an integral part of their day-to-day work. I am quite satisfied with the equipment of our Ministry's gym, and the

My spouse is a teacher.

As for my scientific activities, so far I have authored 12 monographs, two of which were published in Russia. I am also a tutor to postgraduate students, this work requires great consistency. I am a member of two scientific councils and a Professor of International Law at the Yerevan State University.

... Accompanied by Minister Yeritsyan, we made a tour of the Ministry...

It has to be admitted that the Ministry was impressive, - from the Crisis Management Center, where on a huge monitor you could see your own building/apartment as well as the epicenter of an earthquake hundreds of miles away, to the gym equipped with modern equipment and the cafeteria serving a wide range of dishes at surprisingly affordable prices...

What can we wish the staff and the Head of the Ministry of Emergency Situations? The most important thing: less emergency situations in our common - Armenia's life, as well as in their personal lives...

Photos by Emin Aristakesyan / courtesy MES

Acknowledgement:
Colonel Nikolay Grigoryan, Deputy Head of the RAMES Rescue Service

Smbat Lputian, Chess GM, Olympic Champion: "Chess is value in itself that helps people to be honest" Few hours at the Chess Academy of Armenia

By Gourgen James Khazhakian
Chief correspondent

-Mr. Lputian, we know that the idea of founding a chess academy in Armenia in the post-Soviet years belongs to you. Please tell us how the Academy was founded.

- The idea to establish a chess academy in Armenia arose as far back as 1994. After the collapse of the Soviet Union there were numerous problems related to ensuring the development of young chess players. The idea was discussed by authorities at various levels, but it did not rouse a keen response. Upon learning about the project to found a Chess Academy in Armenia, Prime Minister Andranik Margarian of blessed memory showed great interest in that issue and it was with his support that the Chess Academy of Armenia was established in 2002. In 2004, premises were purchased and several years later the building was delivered for operation, - after undergoing extensive repairs and renovation.

As of today, excellent conditions have been created for training our young chess players.

- What kind of institution is the Chess Academy of Armenia itself now?

- The Academy has 45 branches functioning in almost all the towns and large villages of the country. The branches assist with promotion and popularization of chess in Armenia. Besides, we have the opportunity to identify young talents and we try our best to help them develop their abilities.

The requirements for chess players under the age of ten are not very strict. I should note that the instruction at the Chess Academy is free of charge. After attaining age 10, only those children who took from first to fifth places in the championship of the Republic of Armenia have the right to attend the Academy, and if in the next year they fail to achieve at least the same results, they will have to leave the Academy.

- Tell us about the attendance requirements. How often do the best young chess players attend the Academy?

- Lessons are conducted three times a week. The better the results of a chess player, the more time is dedicated to him/her.

- We have heard that the Chess Academy jointly with the RA Ministry of Science and Education holds Chess Olympiads for schoolchildren...

- In fact, it is a very interesting tournament; perhaps it has no precedent in the world. It lasts seven months (from October to May) and involves

four stages: school level, community, regional, and all-republican stages. At the same time, it is quite a difficult sporting event from the organizational point of view as the total number of participants reaches about 15,000.

- Are our famous chess grandmasters teaching in Armenia?

So far only GM Arsen Yeghiazaryan has been teaching our best young players for many years. In recent years

GM Vladimir Hakobyan has given lessons to Armenia's best chess players aged between 18 and 20, and a number of grandmasters give private lessons.

- Could you tell us about the achievements of Academy attendees in various tournaments?

The achievement Number One is that since its establishment the Academy has prepared 8 international grandmasters. Our Chess Academy attendees have won a considerable number of prizes in the junior chess championships of Armenia.

Last year Hayk Martirosyan became the European champion among the 12-year-olds, while our female chess player Maria Gevorgyan won the bronze medal in an under-18 chess championship.

- Since 2004 the RA President

Serzh Sargsyan has been President of the Chess Federation of Armenia. Tell us about his role in the development of chess in Armenia.

- Since 1994 Mr. Sargsyan has been committed to developing chess in our country. Since 1997 he has assisted us each time when we were in difficulties and it is thanks to him that

tion of Armenia, the work style of the Federation completely changed. There were numerous problems which were rapidly and effectively solved. At the initial stage the President of the Republic took some time to familiarize himself with those problems, and the brilliant victories of Armenian chess players in the past few years bear evidence of correct and smart work has been done.

As regards the Chess Academy, after the untimely death of Andranik Margaryan, Serzh Sargsyan committed himself to support the Academy.

- It would be interesting for The Highlights readers to get know how Serzh Sargsyan works as President of the Chess Federation...

- He began assisting us a long time ago so Mr. President fully understands the existing problems. However, when Mr. Sargsyan became President of the Chess Federation, he started to visit the Federation two or three times a month in order to have a clear view of the situation. After familiarizing himself with the problems, Serzh Sargsyan began providing solutions to them. Today too, he solves organizational problems of the chess team and is aware of the Federation's day-to-day affairs and rising problems.

- Neighboring Azerbaijan seems to be competing more successfully in the international arena recently ... In your opinion, what is the reason?

- The splendid victories of Gary Kasparov and his contribution to the recognition of Azerbaijan as a chess country prompted Heydar Aliyev to

pay great attention to chess. Numerous chess schools opened, and this course of action pays off today.

- For what purpose is chess taught in Armenian schools?

- Armenia is the first county to introduce chess as a compulsory subject starting from the second grade. All schools of Armenia have chess teachers. By teaching chess, we try to help children to develop their abilities to reason logically, make decisions, and be creative as well as to learn how to win and lose under conditions of fair competition.

...I believe that a time will come when we will have completely honest and reasonable society.

- Is it possible to use chess way of thinking as a strategy in, say, military operations?

- No doubt chess helps one to correctly assess the situation, understand the opponent, calculate the next moves, and achieve a victory by means of good judgment and rapid actions. In this sense the Armenians' way of thinking allows them to play chess excellently and therefore can be used in planning a strategy.

- What is your main goal in chess?

- I would like chess to remain a pride of our Nation and Country, to be one of our major characteristics. Chess is a certain value in itself that helps people to be honest. There is an opinion that Armenians play chess well because it is an individual struggle, but I think that our people have repeatedly proved that they can be a formidable force when united.

...GM Lputian organized a kind of tour for the correspondent and photographer of The Noyan Tapan Highlights.

The game hall was impressive: with chessboards for 400 (!) children and a special balcony for coaches and fans to follow matches. There are also rooms where one can follow chess games on-line, discuss and analyze them, a hall, a canteen, and an excellently furnished hotel for high-ranking chess officials from abroad...

So it is no a coincidence that FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov and the European Chess Union President Silvio Danailov, after they visited the Chess Academy of Armenia, said it was unique of its kind in Europe.

Photos by Emin Aristakesyan



Smbat Lputian: "There is no doubt that Serzh Sargsyan has been contributing significantly in brilliant victories of the Armenian chess players"



Who knows, maybe one of these kids - the Armenia's Chess Academy alumni pictured at the board with photos of the world champions will become one day another, - after Tigran Petrossian, world champion of the Armenian origin...



Your author gifting his book on legendary Soviet intelligence agents Gevorg and Gohar Vartanyan to the kids of Chess Academy

in 1999 the Armenian chess team had the opportunity to compete in the European Team Chess Championship, becoming Champion for the first time. In 2004 when Serzh Sargsyan was elected President of the Chess Federa-

Paros "Lighthouse" Foundation Raises \$25,000 for Victims of Domestic Violence in Armenia

More than 200 supporters of Paros "Lighthouse" Charitable Foundation USA raised an impressive \$25,000 at a fundraising event on March 11, 2012 at Zov's Bistro in Tustin, CA. The event benefited Paros "Lighthouse" Foundation's vital work assisting victims of domestic violence and other critical outreach services in Armenia. Guests enjoyed delicious appetizers and great wines, all underwritten by Zov's Bistro. Highlighting the event was renowned attorney Mark Geragos, Esq. as the guest speaker.

The event was a call to action for Armenian communities worldwide to take a stand against domestic abuse. Speaking to the guests, Geragos said that in the past 20 years he has observed an increase in spousal abuse cases in California courts among Armenian families. He stated that violence against women anywhere is unacceptable. He encouraged everyone to donate to Paros "Lighthouse" Foundation to help women in crisis in Armenia.

Co- Founder Seta Ghazarian stated, "We serve pregnant and parenting young women in the secure environment of our 13,000 sq. ft. shelter/women's center in the village of Bdghounk. Our core services focus on keeping both mother and child healthy and safe, while teaching the mothers important skills like child development, parenting, and health and nutrition. For women in immediate danger, we have an emergency hotline number, "20-80", which can be called from anywhere in Armenia free of charge. Our goal is to help young Armenian women realize their full potential, despite the dan-



ger and adversity they face."

In addition to aiding victims of domestic violence, Paros "Lighthouse" Foundation also offers desperately needed services to the local community including vocational training, psychological counseling and therapy, sewing and cooking classes, women's health services with an on-site OBGYN physician, dental health services with an on-site dentist, feeding the poor and elderly, supporting a local kindergarten, weekly Bible study, and donations of essential goods to the needy in Armenia and Artsakh.

Zuhrab and Seta Ghazarian have been engaged in charity work and community outreach for underprivileged and underserved Armenians since 1999. The idea of "Paros" (meaning "lighthouse" in Armenian) was established by friends and supporters of the Ghazarian family, and grew out of their concern for Armenian women and children as well as the integrity of the Armenian family. Paros "Lighthouse" Armenian Charitable Foundation USA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, public benefit corporation registered in the State of California and Republic of Armenia.

Confucius Institute is a good bridge between China and Armenia

The Confucius Institute is a good bridge between China and Armenia in cultural and educational spheres, the Chinese principal of the Confucius Institute in Armenia Lee Mei who is completing her mission on this post told the reporter of Armenian News-NEWS.am.

Lee Mei will soon return to China. "I have worked in Armenia for two years," Lee mentioned adding that many events were organized in that period towards acquainting Armenians with Chinese language and culture. As she mentioned, there is a big progress.

The Confucius Institute in Armenia was founded three years ago and it had an auditorium of 100 people and that number keeps increasing. Around 50 students were able to continue their education in China due to the institute.

"After returning the young people informed that they were really impressed, that they fell in love with China, the Chinese culture and cuisine," she mentioned.

The principal mentioned that even though progresses have been registered and there is mutual interest between the Chinese and Armenian nations, there is still much work to be done.

Lee Mei informed that after returning to China she will work in Shanxi University and will continue to introduce the Chinese language and culture to foreign-



ers.

"I shall also spread information about Armenia in China, about its culture, language and beauty. Hopefully I shall be able to contribute to more Chinese visiting to Armenia," she added.

The Global Chain of Confucius Institutes is an international chain of cultural-educational centers and its aim is the spread the Chinese language in foreign countries.

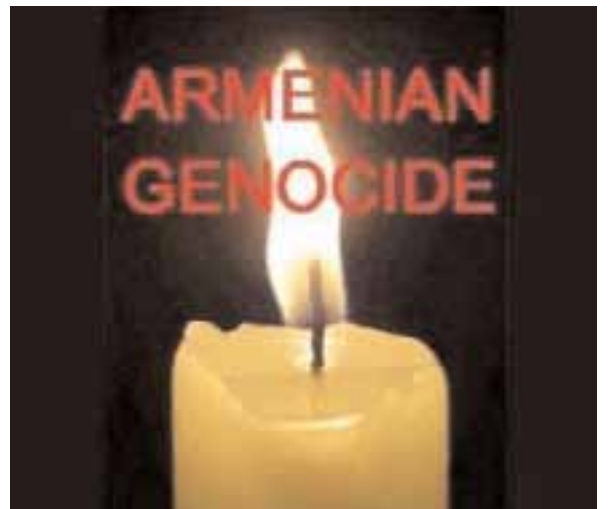
Canadians - first spectator of play telling about Armenian Genocide

On 29 March "State of Denial" play authored by Rahul Varma was presented to the Canadian spectator, Armenpress reports citing "Montréal mirror" website.

In writing this play, Varma derived a fictional story from multiple true stories garnered from years of interviews as a part of the research for Life Stories of Montrealers Displaced by Genocide, War and Other Human Rights Violations. State of Denial is being presented as a part of Life Stories Montreal and is directed by Deborah Forde.

The story centers around a Rwandan-born Canadian filmmaker, Odette, who has been working in Turkey to create a documentary about Armenian survivors of the genocide that took place almost a hundred years ago during the rule of the Ottoman empire.

One interesting thing about this play is that while watching it one cannot help but notice the similarities between stories from the Armenian genocide, the filmmaker's stories of Rwanda, and stories that we have all heard about the most famous of genocides, the



Holocaust. This helps drive home the fact that genocide is a tragedy that keeps on occurring, which is why the playwright seeks to spread these stories and prevent history from repeating itself.

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DID YOU KNOW?



Heading by
Marina Harutiunyan
marina@nt.am
Comments are
welcomed!

Chocolate makes you skinnier

If you've been avoiding chocolate because it makes you fat, think again. The latest research has found that eating chocolate often can make you skinnier.

A study at the University of California, San Diego, found that eating certain types of chocolate is linked to better measurements of blood pressure, insulin sensitivity and cholesterol levels, and a lower body mass index.

The authors tested the hypothesis that modest, regular chocolate consumption might be calorie-neutral. In other words, the metabolic benefits of eating small chocolate portions might lead to reduced fat deposition per calories, offsetting the added calories.

The study surveyed 1,018 men and women in good health. They were asked how often they ate chocolate, answered a food frequency questionnaire, and were weighed.

Writing in the Archives of Internal Medicine, the authors said: "Adults who consumed chocolate more frequently had a lower BMI than those who consumed chocolate less often."

The size of the effect was modest but the effect was significant - larger than could be explained by chance, the authors wrote.

This was despite the fact that those who ate chocolate more often ate more calories, and did not exercise more.

Study leader Dr Beatrice Golomb said: "Our findings appear to add to a body of information suggesting that the composition of calories, not just the number of them, matters for determining their ultimate impact on weight.

"In the case of chocolate, this is good news - both for those who have a regular chocolate habit, and those who may wish to start one."

The authors said the findings merit a further randomized trial of chocolate for metabolic benefits in humans.



ARMENIAN POETRY

St. Gregory of Narek (951-1003)

Prayer 1

Speaking with God from the Depths of the Heart

The voice of a sighing heart, its sobs and mournful cries,
I offer up to you, O Seer of Secrets,
placing the fruits of my wavering mind
as a savory sacrifice on the fire of my grieving soul
to be delivered to you in the censer of my will.
Compassionate Lord, breathe in
this offering and look more favorably on it
than upon a more sumptuous sacrifice
offered with rich smoke. Please find
this simple string of words acceptable.
Do not turn in disdain.
May this unsolicited gift reach you,
this sacrifice of words
from the deep mystery-filled chamber
of my feelings, consumed in flames
fueled by whatever grace I may have within me.
As I pray, do not let these
pleas annoy you, Almighty,
like the raised hands of Jacob,
whose irreverence was rebuked
by Isaiah, nor let them seem like the impudence
of Babylon criticized in the 72nd Psalm.
But let these words be acceptable
as were the fragrant offerings
in the tabernacle at Shiloh
raised again by David on his return from captivity
as the resting place for the ark of the covenant,
a symbol for the restoration of my lost soul.

Stories of a Silent Generation: Father-Daughter Filmmakers Set out to Tell Family Story



By Abby Alexanian

I don't speak Armenian. I've never been to the Republic of Armenia. I rarely eat the food or attend Armenian Church services. But I can't shake the feeling that I am definitely Armenian. Yet as much as I feel that I am Armenian, I also can't seem to figure out what that means.

Human beings are "meaning makers" - we turn our memories into stories that give meaning to the past. Meaning helps us understand pain and joy, it teaches us about ourselves, and it gives us various parts of our identities. Family histories especially confer meaning on each new generation; in many ways, our family stories create us. Yet what happens when those stories are immensely painful? And what happens when these stories in particular are not told?

Whenever my dad talked about growing up in an Armenian family in Worcester, Massachusetts, the

life he described always felt so foreign to me that he and I might have grown up in entirely different countries. I cherished those rare stories I heard about my dad's childhood - like how he spent afternoons with his grandfather on the second floor of his family's tenement, speaking only Armenian and learning wood-working. Yet his family had been desperately poor; life hadn't been easy, but even amidst the difficulties - or perhaps because of them - his family maintained the Armenian way of life that my dad's grandparents carried with them from the old country.

There are many things about my Armenian family that I learned only in small bits and pieces scattered through my childhood, or that I never knew until I started asking questions. For instance: the grandfather that my dad spent so much time with as a boy was a survivor of the 1915 Armenian Genocide, and my grandmother's mother saw her husband, three daughters, and par-

ents killed before she was marched through the desert for months. These were not the stories I heard growing up.

The genocide is not often spoken of, even amongst Armenians, and this silence has carried scars of its own. An undercurrent of deep unhealed pain runs through the Armenian's identity, and even if we know little of the genocide, our ancient heritage, or the vanishing traditions - this pain touches us.

But how are we supposed to make sense of this pain? When silence replaces stories, we grasp at meaning but have nothing to hold onto.

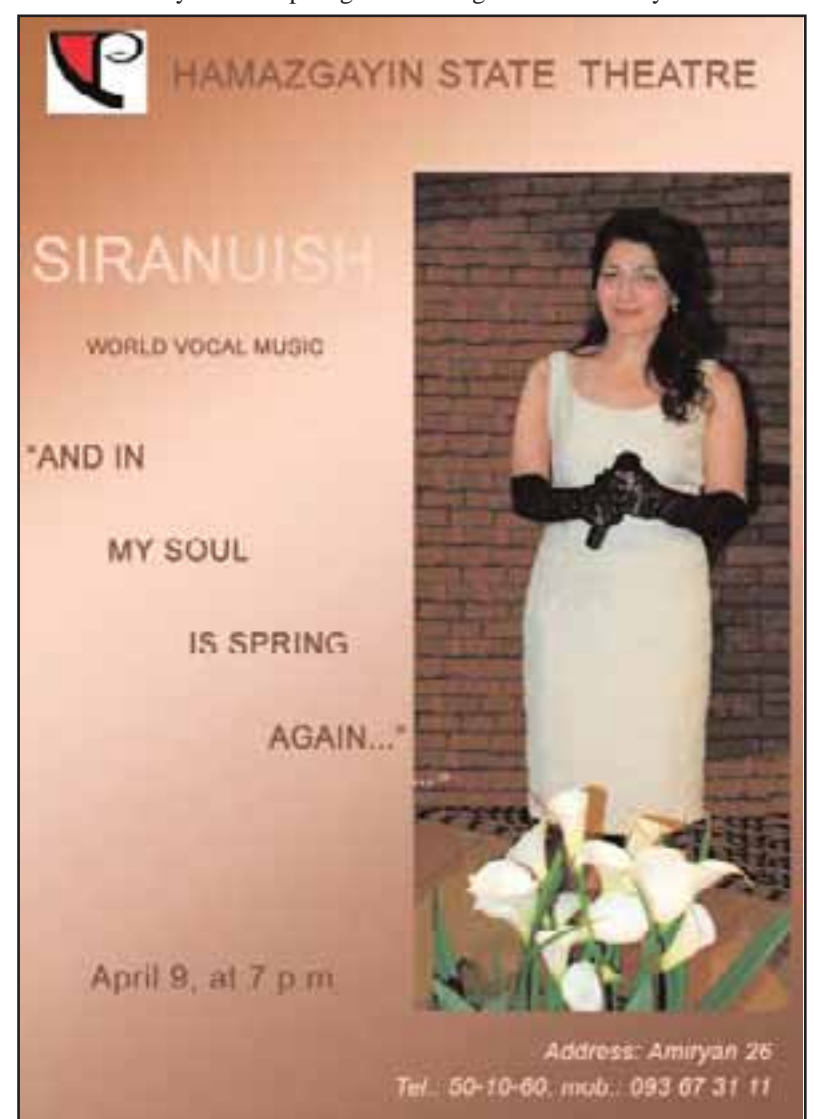
For the children of the silent generations, any identity we receive from our part-Armenian-ness consists almost entirely of wanting to have more of it, to know more of it, and to be more of it. Michael J. Arlen, son of an Armenian father and a Greek-American mother, begins his memoir *Passage to Ararat* with this very idea: "At a particular time in my life, I set out on a voyage to discover for myself what it is to be Armenian. For although I myself am Armenian, or part Armenian, until then I knew nothing about either Armenians or Armenia." A generation of Armenians was swallowed by the genocide in 1915, but now a new generation of Armenians is threatened with extinction as well, though of a different sort: for the great-grandchildren of the survivors, Armenia is losing its meaning.

How can we go about creating meaning where what we have

encountered most often is silence? We can start by looking for the stories.

The silence in my family has started to relax, mostly because my dad and I decided to make a film about it. Our documentary, tentatively titled *Journey to Armenia: Three Generations from Genocide*, will be the story of our trips togeth-

er to the Republic of Armenia and Eastern Turkey (aka Western Armenia), beginning with our first trip this summer. Like archeologists of our own family history, we will visit the four villages that our family members fled from almost a hundred years ago. And in the process, we hope to learn more about what being Armenian really means.



Zodiac Weekly Forecast

Aries (Mar. 20 - Apr. 19):



This spring equinox is exploding right on your doorstep. There is a sense of general chaos among corporate bodies and it appears to include you in a personal way. Take a fresh look at where you want to direct your attention. Use this month to let go of past hurts and take a deep breath of healing energy.

Taurus (Apr. 20 - May 19):



You may feel caught between a rock and a hard place now. Your beliefs or the rules pressure you with one concept while reality sends a different message. Practicality and ethics are not in agreement. Look for a higher point of view that will allow these to exist side by side.

Gemini (May 20 - June 20):



This is a very fine week for the Twins, with plenty of activity to keep "both" of you going socially. Venus enters your sign on the 3rd and will be traveling "with you" from now through mid-July. Her presence gives you an air of poise and people will simply like how you look.

Cancer (June 21 - July 21):



You are moving through a time in which your instinct for social justice has many places to operate. You will find that skills accumulated from your past experience will add to your efficiency and ability to accomplish things that are important to your sense of ethics.

Leo (July 21 - Aug 22):



You are in a handicapped spot right now. You may have legal or ethical issues on your plate. The Powers That Be are running the show and almost any move you make outside of the box will be challenged. For the time being you are surrounded. Accept this with grace for the present. Your time comes later.

Virgo (Aug. 22 - Sep. 22):



This is a good time to finish ongoing projects and clear the decks to shift gears next week as Mercury, your planetary ruler, turns direct. As it moves forward, partners and others in your life will be able to make decisions, which will relieve you of the baggage you're carrying around for them.

Libra (Sep. 23 - Oct. 22):



You might be putting significant effort into issues involving your family or your home at this time. The symbol suggests you are digging deeply into the ground or the symbolic truth. It is possible that you are discovering a truth about your family history that completely alters your perspective.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21):



It is of paramount importance that you control your mouth this week, especially in the work arena. Although you have an opinion about whatever is happening, let it go and say nothing unless asked for it. Being "right" is not as important as maintaining human relations. This is not a good time to argue.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 20):



Your creative mind is percolating with new ideas. Various circumstances have prevented you from achieving materialization as yet, but keep working on your plans. The challenges will soon give way to open space. Love and romance are on the mend and will be a source of joy soon.

Capricorn (Dec. 21 - Jan. 19):



A new project or person that began at the first of this year is now up for review. The time has come to grow it or let go. In order to grow it, you must invest considerably more resources. That could be time, money, or energy. Your home and family will benefit from your renewed commitment.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 17):



You are caught between what you should do and what you want to do. The routine is safe, but also boring. Your mind may play tricks on you and you could be distracted easily. This is not a good time to do work that requires discipline with details. You are feeling independent, so you may want more alone time than is the norm.

Pisces (Feb. 18 - Mar. 19):



This week is about finding healing on either the physical or emotional levels. You may be the healer or the healee. If a friendship or a more significant relationship needs mending, now is the time to do so. The willingness to open your heart and mind to give and to receive is yours at this time.

Cafesjian Center for the Arts

Music Cascade



Date

07.04, at 8 p.m. Komitas,
Musician and Poet

price: 2000



WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? Enjoy your leisure

A.SPENDIARIAN OPERA AND BALLET NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATER

April 4, at 7 p.m.

Anush
A. Tigranian,
Opera in 3 acts
Conductor: Karen Durgaryan
April 10, at 7 p.m.

Arshak II

Tigran Chukhajyan,
Opera in 2 acts
Dedicated to the
40th anniversary
of Konstantin Simonyan's
Activity in the Opera Art.
Artistic Director and
Principal Conductor:
Karen Durgaryan

ARAM KHACHATRIAN CONCERT HALL

April 3 at 7 p.m.

YEREVAN PERSPECTIVES

13th International Music Festival

Tokyo String Quartet

Martin Beaver, violin

Kikuei Ikeda, violin

Kazuhide Isomura, viola

Clive Winsmith, cello

Program:

Haydn: Streichquartett G-Dur op.

77 Nr. 1 Hob III: 81

Bartók: Streichquartett Nr. 6 D-Dur

SZ 114

Debussy: Streichquartett g-moll op.

10

April 6, at 7 p.m.

Stabat Mater

Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra

Artistic Director and Principal

Conductor: Eduard Topchjan

Participants:

National Chamber Choir of

Armenia

Artistic Director and Principal

Conductor: Robert Mlkeyan

Hover State Chamber Choir

Artistic Director and Choirmaster:

Sona Hovhannissyan

Our Lady of Armenia Choir

Artistic Director and Conductor:
Robert Mlkeyan

Soloists:

Mane Galoyan, soprano

Mary Movsisyan, soprano

Narine Ananikyan, mezzo soprano

Conductor: Robert Mlkeyan

Program: Pergolesi, Poulenc:

"Stabat Mater"

H.TUMANIAN STATE PUPPET THEATER

April 7, at 7 p.m.

Author Song and Pantomime.

Belated Conversation 10 Years later

April 8, at 7 p.m.

C'est la vie, Comedy

Lead role: Narek Duryan

G. SUNDUKIAN NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

April 3, 4 at 7 p.m.

Let's Reach Sasoun: Concert-show

ARNO BABAJANYAN CONCERT HALL

April 7, at 7 p.m.

Liana Zurabyan. Woman, Mother,

My Goddess

Liana Zurabyan poetry center pre-

sents:

The literary-musical evening,

"Woman, Mother, My Goddess"

dedicated to Motherhood and

Beauty Day.

K. STANISLAVSKI STATE RUSSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

April 2, 3, at 7 p.m.

Don Juan Avia

Staged on the basis of "Boeing-

Boeing", a classical farce by 20th

century French playwright Marc

Camoletti

April 4, at 7 p.m.

Classmates, Yu. Polyakov

April 5, at 7 p.m.

Love with Skeleton. Premiere

April 8, at 7 p.m.

Shahane, You're My... Premierre.

G. Lalayants



Quote of the week

Do what you can, with what you
have, where you are.

Theodore Roosevelt

HUMOR

Must help the wife

Smith goes to see his supervisor in the front office. "Boss," he says, "we're doing some heavy house-cleaning at home tomorrow, and my wife needs me to help with the attic and the garage, moving and hauling stuff."

"We're short-handed, Smith" the boss replies. "I can't give you the day off."

"Thanks, boss," says Smith "I knew I could count on you!"

A PARIS

A LOUER
QUARTIER CHAMPS-ELYSEES
STUDIOS MEUBLES

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